

Islam and Islamic Fundamentalism: Who's "the Great Satan" here?

The Ayatollah Khomeini once referred to the United States of America as "the Great Satan" and to the Nation of Israel as "the Little Satan". He was merely echoing the cries of millions of Islamic fundamentalist extremists over the past fifty years.

The Roots of Islam

To understand the mindset of a Muslim one must go back to the roots of the Islamic "faith".

Muhammad, the last of twenty-eight recognized prophets and founder of the Islamic religion, was born in Mecca, Arabia in the year 570 AD. Early in the 7th century he was reportedly visited by the angel Gabriel who said to him, "O Muhammad, thou who art the Prophet of the Lord, I am Gabriel. Arise and preach."

By that time Judaism was over 2000 years old and Christianity was entering its 7th century of existence. Muhammad interpreted this visit as a call to begin a newer, better, and more "truthful" religion in which one must surrender and be under submission to Allah, the one "true" God. The word "Islam" in Arabic literally means "surrender or submission".

Now for anyone familiar with the Holy Scriptures, which comprise the special revelation of the Only True God, Yahweh or Jehovah, our Triune Father, Son and Holy Spirit, this angelic visitation should immediately call to mind the timely caveat of the apostle Paul who said, "If we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned." (Galatians 1:8) This "angel" was unquestionably one of the fallen angels, and maybe even Lucifer himself, who has often appeared "as an angel of light." (II Corinthians 11:14)

Interestingly, another deceived man, Joseph Smith, was visited by another "angel" named Moroni in 1893 after which Smith founded the Mormon religion, the fastest growing cult in the world today.

Muhammad himself was thought as a child to be demon possessed because of his numerous convulsive seizures. At age 25 he married a 40-year-old woman, who was married on two previous occasions. She bore him two sons and four daughters. In all, during his 62 years of life, Muhammad had fifteen wives the youngest being ten years of age.

From its outset Muhammad's new religion was one known for terror and conquest. His first attack on a community of Jews began at Medina, Saudi Arabia; at that time they had been living there as refugees from Syria. When the Jews surrendered, Muhammad had planned to kill them one by one, but at the pleading of an Arabian man named Abdullah he freed the Jews but instead banished them from their homes and plundered all of their worldly goods.

Islamic attacks on Jews continue to this day. Muhammad's entire "religious" life was marked by one skirmish or battle after another and the slaying of many "infidels". Finally on June 8, 632, at the age of 62 Muhammad died of a febrile disease.

From the above brief description of this man's life, is it any wonder that many of his biographers have referred to him as a "madman"? After all, just look at the last three letters of his name.

The Duties or Pillars of Islam

According to their religious convictions all Muslims believe that the only way for them to attain eternal life in Paradise is to adhere to a strict set of duties, five of which are paramount, and are known traditionally as the Five Pillars of Islam.

- **The Creed:** "There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is the messenger of Allah".

This confession of "faith" must be repeated constantly by Muslim believers. You may recall that Muhammad Ali (AKA Cassius Clay) always parroted those words before every interview following each of his heavyweight boxing matches.

- **Daily Prayers and Friday Public Service:** A life of prayer to Allah is central to a devout Muslim. He performs it upon arising, at noon, in the mid-afternoon, after sunset, and upon retiring to his bed.

All prayer is offered while facing Mecca and all prayers are prescribed. They are mostly repeated while kneeling or prostrate, face on the floor.

Public services take place on Friday with men and women separated. Jews worship on day seven, Christians on day one and Muslims on day SIX; is that number significant?

- **The Fast of Ramadan:** This religious exercise lasts for an entire month and consists of fasting each day from sunup to sundown. Furthermore, during Ramadan, Muslims must abstain, not only from food and drink, but sexual activity as well.
- **Almsgiving:** All Muslims are required to give one-fortieth of their income to the needy. There are also other rules regulating the giving away of cattle, produce, and other forms of wealth. One who does not give can never hope to gain salvation.
- **The Pilgrimage to Mecca:** Every Muslim is expected to make at least one pilgrimage to Mecca, in Saudi Arabia, during some time of his life. Putting this off may necessitate the long travel when one has become infirm, thus making the trip quite arduous. Muslims are thus encouraged to make their pilgrimage while still young and vigorous. This religious exercise involves a set of ceremonies around the Kabah shrine in Mecca. It is believed that this journey

to the shrine will serve to solidify and heighten one's Islamic faith.

The "Holy Books"

The Quran: Also spelled Koran, this book, regarded as the holiest of all books, is divided into 114 Surats (chapters). It is a compilation of the various sayings of Muhammad, written down by his followers and wives during his lifetime, but only assembled into one text several after his death. The Quran was first printed in Arabic in Rome in 1530; French and English translations followed 100 years later.

This most revered of all books in the Muslim contains the "truths" of only one author expounded over a period of less than 40 years. Compare that with the Holy Scriptures, a work of the Holy Spirit, written down over 1500 years by 40 separate authors from widely diverse backgrounds, yet all in perfect agreement.

Most Muslims also recognize three other books as "holy". The Torah (Moses' five books), the Psalms of David, and the gospel of Jesus. They have their own versions of these however, believing that the originals have been corrupted or lost.

What Muslims Believe

All Muslims must believe in five articles of *Iman* (faith):

- Allah is the one true God.
- Angels are the instruments of God's will.
- Four books are inspired; Torah, Zabur(Psalms), Injil(gospel of Jesus), and Quran (this being the final and complete truth)
- Twenty-eight prophets of Allah, of whom Muhammad is the last. These include Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Isaac, Jacob, Ishmael, Joseph, David, Solomon, Elijah, Elisha, Jonah, John the Baptist, Zechariah, and Jesus.
- A final day of judgement and assignment to either Paradise or Hell.

Muslims trace their family tree back to Ishmael, the son of Abraham and Hagar. It is instructive to read what our Lord God Yahweh said to Hagar regarding this child. " You are now with child and you will have a son. You shall name him Ishmael, for the Lord has heard of your misery. He will be a *wild donkey of a man; his hand will be against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he will live in hostility against his brothers.*" (Genesis 16:11-12) (Emphasis mine)

Is that prophesy not unfolding most dramatically before our eyes this very day? Who other than a "wild man" could fly airliners into the offices of innocent people, and who other than "wild" people could jump up and down

rejoicing at the news that this had just happened?

Islamic Sects

Just as there are different denominations within the Christian faith, there are also separate sects of Islam; currently there are reportedly over 150 of them. The leading ones are as follows:

- **Sunnis:** This is by far the largest, a fact quite fortunate since they are among the most peace-loving of all Muslims.
- **Shiites:** They consider themselves the true possessors of Islamic truth. They are seen wearing turbans and were the sect in Iran that was responsible for the overthrow of the Shah. The Ayatollah Khomeini was their most infamous leader.
- **Wahhabis:** More militant than even the Shiites, their war cry is, "Kill and strangle all infidels." They believe that everyone of their soldiers dying in battles for Allah will go straight into Paradise.
- **Suffis:** They are a blend of Islamic and the Indian Vedantic philosophies.
- **Bahaiism:** This sect began in the 19th century as an attempt to blend the teachings of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. A movement of theological syncretism, it is rapidly growing as people disenchanted with secular humanism and New Age philosophy are seeking "higher truth".

The Islamic Jihad

For most Muslims, adherence to the above-enumerated pillars is sufficient to gain entrance into the Paradise of Allah. However, the more fundamental and extremist sects would add a sixth pillar, a sixth essential requirement; the Jihad, or "Holy War".

When a situation arises and dictates full submission to Allah's will, men of Islam are required to go to war in order to spread Islam or defend it against infidels. A Muslim who dies in a Jihad is guaranteed eternal life in Paradise.

Some of the most notorious of these Islamic fundamentalist extremist groups are the Islamic Jihad, the Hamas, and the Muslim Brotherhood. These extremists are a threat to both Israel and the United States of America. They consider that the only good American is a dead American; the only good Jew a dead Jew.

Thus they have little compunction when asked to sacrifice their lives for the "cause" and harbor no fear when they strap on a self-destructing bomb to be exploded on an Israeli bus, or in the midst of a crowded Israeli marketplace, or as we now sadly know, fly a loaded airliner into the offices of civilians. We now also know the sad truth that their abject disregard for American lives and a false hope of pleasing Allah gave them the impetus for flying those two huge passenger jets into the World Trade Center's twin towers and one into the

Pentagon. Fortunately some brave Americans on the fourth jet were able to foil their other plans to attack Camp David, or the White House, and crash their plane into the hills of Pennsylvania.

Knowing the mindset of their founder, Muhammad, one can readily understand the militant zeal and disregard for the sanctity of life that these deranged individuals and all like them possess.

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), headed by Yasser Arafat, while not quite as radical as the Hamas, Islamic Jihad, or Muslim Brotherhood, and more secular than religious is never-the less dedicated to the irradiation of the State of Israel by any means and at any cost.

These terrorist organizations have established headquarters in cities throughout the United States during the past decade. They run "harmless" businesses and professions as fronts, while they plot to destroy "the Great Satan" and take over the world for Allah.

Cool Heads Must Prevail

We must be very careful however, not to paint all Muslims as the perpetrators of these evil acts. While it is true that Muslims are a deceived group of people, they are not all extremists or members of those fundamentalists terrorist groups named above. For the most part, those living in America prefer the freedoms that we enjoy, rather than living in their native countries where there exist no religious freedoms or individual rights.

Just as there are Christians with differing amounts of zeal and varying degrees of legalistic and traditional beliefs, there are Muslims who disagree with the terrorists and their hatred of anyone who calls himself a Christian or herself a Jew.

We all know Islamic people who are genuinely nice, gentle, and peace-loving individuals. It is truly sad that they are all headed for Hell, and a Christless eternity, along with a lot of other "nice" religious people who have rejected Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, in favor of a belief in their own version of "god". However, that is a truth which we cannot deny and our only hope for winning these deceived people is to be loving and Christ-like toward them, and always ready to explain our belief in Christ. (I Peter 3:15)

Nonetheless, we must also realize that there are Muslims living in the United States of America who do sympathize with the likes of Usama bin Laden and we must always be on the alert when dealing with these people. Make no mistake about this, there are tens of thousands of people from the Muslim communities in the United States, who worship in their Mosques on Friday but lend support, both emotionally and financially to the goals of Islamic terrorists the other six days of the week.

In Vietnam it was nearly impossible to tell the Viet Cong from the peaceful and friendly South Vietnamese, and it was often too late when one finally discovered their real identity.

The Islamic Threat to World Peace

As of this date there are approximately one billion Muslims worldwide and the number of radicals (in the millions) within that number definitely pose a formidable threat to the Judeo-Christian World. Satan would like nothing better than to rid the earth of both Judaism and Christianity and his use of the Muslim nations to accomplish this end is not out of the question.

At this point in time, it appears that only the militant Islamic groups are networking to obliterate all "infidels". It is not too late, and never too early to, begin a positive action against these madmen.

Benjamin Netanyahu, former Prime Minister of Israel said this on a Fox News broadcast, on September 12, 2001; "Islamic terrorists have the will to destroy us but not the power. The United States and Israel have the power to destroy them, and now we must gather the will."

Islamic World View

In sympathy with the views of their founder, Muslims believe that all non-Muslims are infidels. Muhammad's goal and that of his most militant followers is eventual world domination. In 1985 the extremist Muslims asserted "If we can take London for Islam, we can take the world."

President Bush and our government, military and intelligence leaders have now begun a concerted effort, a virtual war on terrorism, that will attempt to eliminate the extreme fundamentalist pockets from all countries in the world, including our own. This, it goes without saying, will be a most formidable task. It must however be done if this insane Islamic movement is to be stopped.

At this point in time, the majority of Muslims deplore the activities of the terrorist element in their communities. However, when it ultimately comes down to supporting them, their Islamic brothers, or the "Great and Little Satan", The United States and Israel respectively, on whose side do you think this Muslim majority will ultimately take their stand?

If they can be convinced that it is the will of Allah to conquer the world, eliminate the infidels, and establish a worldwide theocracy under the leadership of his followers then we will have lost the war.

Remember, that this religion was begun by a madman, a raving lunatic, who was undoubtedly visited by a demon, or even Satan himself, and that now demon possessed madmen are continuing to do his will, as well as that of their one "true god", Allah.

Remember too what our God has told us about a monotheistic belief in a "god"; "You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that_and shudder." (James 2:19)

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Further reading: *Islam Revealed: A Christian Arab's View of Islam*, Dr. Anis A.

Shorrosh –Thomas Nelson Publishers

Website:

<http://www.nizkor.org/hweb/orgs/american/adl/hamas/introduction.html>